

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SP-02 HA-02 NSC-05 INR-05
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EB-04 OMB-01 TRSE-00 H-01 /063 W
-----011754 301118Z/15

R 300824Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4704

CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 1 OF 3 KUALA LUMPUR 4863

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF, SHUM, PINS, MY
SUBJECT: MALAYSIAN HOME MINISTER'S VIEWS ON SECURITY, HUMAN
RIGHTS AND REFUGEES

REF: A) KUALA LUMPUR 4395, B) KUALA LUMPUR 4392, C) STATE
125638

1. SUMMARY: DURING A MAY 29 CALL PRIOR TO RETURNING
TO WASHINGTON FOR CONSULTATIONS, AMBASSADOR SOUGHT
HOME MINISTER TAN SRI GHAZALI SHAFIE'S VIEWS ON BOTH
INTERNAL AND REGIONAL SECURITY. SUBJECTS OF REFUGEES
AND HUMAN RIGHTS ALSO WERE DISCUSSED, AS WERE OTHER
TOPICS BEING REPORTED SEPTELS. GHAZALI STRESSED
THAT GOM SEES PROBLEM OF COMBATTING COMMUNIST THREAT
TO BE AN ENDURING ONE, NOTED THAT THE ASEAN GOVERN-
MENTS ARE IDEOLOGICALLY OPPOSED TO COMMUNISM, AND
WARNED THAT THE COMMUNISTS WOULD EXPLOIT ANY SIGNS OF
AMBIVALENCE BY THESE REGIMES. IN THIS CONTEXT HE
WAS ADAMANT IN DEFENDING THE GOVERNMENT'S RIGHT TO
DETAIN WITHOUT TRIAL UNDER THE INTERNAL SECURITY
ACT (ISA) NOT ONLY THOSE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED IN
COMMUNIST TERRORIST ACTIVITIES BUT ANYONE ASSOCIATING
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WITH COMMUNISM WHICH AS A DOCTRINE IS CONSIDERED
ANATHEMA BY THE GOM AND CONSEQUENTLY HAS BEEN
OUTLAWED. GHAZALI ALSO QUESTIONED THE EFFICACY
OF GOM PROVIDING US WITH INFORMATION ON CIRCUM-
STANCES OF ARREST AND CONDITIONS OF SEVERAL
INDIVIDUALS CURRENTLY DETAINED UNDER THE ISA
ON THE GROUNDS THAT THE INFORMATION SO PROVIDED

WOULD BE CONSIDERED BY INQUIRERS TO BE BIASED.
FINALLY, ON REFUGEES, THE GOM MINISTER WHILE
EXPRESSING CONCERN WITH THE CONTINUING OUTFLOW
OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES TO MALAYSIA'S SHORES DID
NOT INDICATE OVER-RIDING ALARM WITH THE SITUATION.
INTERESTINGLY, HE RECEIVES THIS AS A PROBLEM OF
FORCED EVICTION OF CHINESE, WHO HE CLAIMED NOW
PREDOMINATE AMONG THE REFUGEES. WHILE REFERRING
TO US AND MALAYSIAN RESETTLEMENT ROLES, GHAZALI
SUGGESTED EFFORTS BE MADE TO PERSUADE LATIN
AMERICAN NATIONS TO ACCEPT A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER
OF THESE REFUGEES. END SUMMARY.

2. SECURITY. IN RAISING THE SUBJECT OF SECURITY,
THE AMBASSADOR RECALLED GHAZALI'S REMARK TO CODEL
WOLFF LAST JANUARY TO THE EFFECT THAT BY MARCH
GOM SUCCESSES AGAINST THE COMMUNIST UNDERGROUND
WOULD PERMIT SECURITY FORCES TO FOCUS ON THE TASK
OF ROOTING ARMED COMMUNIST ELEMENTS OUT OF THEIR
JUNGLE HIDEOUTS. GHAZALI REPLIED THAT ALTHOUGH
IT WAS DIFFICULT TO FOLLOW A TIGHT TIMETABLE,
THE PICTURE CONTINUED TO IMPROVE, PARTICULARLY
IN THE AREA OF JOINT SECURITY COOPERATION WITH
THE THAIS. THIS IS A WAR OF INTELLIGENCE,
INTELLIGENCE BREEDS SUCCESS, AND SUCCESS BRINGS
MORE INTELLIGENCE, HE OPINED. A PARTICULAR
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PROBLEM HAS BEEN TO PERSUADE THE THAIS TO IMPLEMENT
THEIR IDEAS; FOR EXAMPLE, FOR LONGER TERM FUNDING
OF SECURITY MATTERS RATHER THAN THE CUSTOMARY
SHORT-TERM, AD HOC APPROACH TO DEFENSE EXPENDITURES
(HE CITED INSTANCES WHERE MALAYSIAN TROOPS HAD
SHARED RATIONS WITH THAI COLLEAGUES WHEN THE
THAI RATION ALLOWANCES HAD EXPIRED IN MID-OPERATION).
GHAZALI ADDED THAT THE PROBLEM OF MANAGEMENT,
OF APPLYING THEORY TO PRACTICE, EXTENDED TO THE
MALAYSIAN SIDE AS WELL. IN THIS REGARD HE CITED
THE CASE, UNTIL RECENTLY, OF THE STATE OF PAHANG
WHERE GOM SECURITY COUNTERMEASURES WERE INEFFECTIVE,
IN CONTRAST TO THE STATE OF PERAK WHERE THE GOVERN-
MENT SIDE HAS BEEN MUCH MORE SUCCESSFUL, THUS
NECESSITATING A SHAKEUP OF THE GOM "MANAGERS"
IN PAHANG.

3. IN RESPONSE TO THE AMBASSADOR'S QUERY ON HIS
ASSESSMENT OF REGIONAL SECURITY, PARTICULARLY
THE SRV-CAMBODIA PROBLEM, GHAZALI REMARKED
THAT HE SEES GROUNDS FOR OPTIMISM. ALTHOUGH THE
LIKELIHOOD OF PERIODIC "FLAREUPS" EXISTS, HE DOES

NOT FORESEE ANY OF THE ASEAN COUNTRIES FACING
IMMINENT THREATS OF COMMUNIST TAKEOVER. HE
SAID THAT FROM HIS PERSONAL TIES WITH LEADERS OF
INDONESIA, THAILAND AND SINGAPORE--HE NOTED THAT
HE DID NOT KNOW THE FILIPINO LEADERSHIP THAT
WELL-HE WAS CONFIDENT THAT THESE COUNTRIES WOULD
REMAIN VIGILANT IN OPPOSING THE THREAT OF
COMMUNISM, TO WHICH AS AN IDEOLOGY THEY ARE ALL
OPPOSED AND CONSIDER ANATHEMA. HE WARNED
THAT "THE MOMENT WE (THE ASEAN NATIONS) ARE
AMBIVALENT, THEY (THE COMMUNISTS) WILL COME IN".
AS FOR THE SRV-CAMBODIA TERRITORIAL DISPUTE
PROVIDING POSSIBLE CLUES OF VIETNAMESE INTENTIONS,
GHAZALI RETRTED THAT THE LONG-TERM INTENTIONS OF
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THE COMMUNIST REGIMES ARE UNDENIABLE AND ARE SET
FORTH IN THE TEXTS OF MARX AND ENGELS; ANYONE WHO
THINKS OTHERWISE IS NAIVE. HE STATED THAT THE

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ACTION EA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SP-02 HA-02 NSC-05 INR-05
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R 300824Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4705

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 3 KUALA LUMPUR 4863

LIMDIS

OVERRIDING PROBLEM IS THAT COMMUNISM, A FAILED
DOCTRINE, HAS GAINED THE BANNER OF RESPECTABILITY
THROUGH ITS IDENTIFICATION WITH THE SOVIET UNION AND THE PRC.

4. IN MALAYSIA, GHAZALI CONTINUED, THE GOM IS

QUITE AWARE THAT THE DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THE COMMUNIST PARTY APPARATUS AND THE GOVERNMENT MACHINERY ARE FALSE ONES, AND THUS CONSIDERS THE SOVIET AND CHINESE EMBASSIES HERE TO BE AGENTS OF THEIR COMMUNIST PARTIES. "WE ONLY LET THE CHINESE OPEN AN EMBASSY BECAUSE WE WERE PREPARED TO DEAL WITH THEM ON THAT BASIS, AND LET THE FOREIGN MINISTRY PLAY THE NECESSARY" GAMES" THIS INVOLVES," HE DECLARED. HE ADDED THAT THE INDONESIANS FOR SIMILAR REASONS ARE "NOT YET READY TO FACT THE SITUATION" AND CLAIMED THAT FOLLOWING HIS OWN "FOUR EYES" SESSION WITH PRESIDENT SUHARTO IN LABUAN SEVERAL DAYS AGO THE INDONESIANS HAVE EVEN BACKED AWAY FROM THE NOTION OF DIRECT TRADE RELATIONS.

5. IN RESPONSE TO THE AMBASSADOR'S REMARK THAT MEASURES TO IMPROVE THE ECONOMIC WELFARE OF THE

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PEOPLE THROUGH MECHANISMS SUCH AS MALAYSIA'S "NEW ECONOMIC POLICY (NEP) ALSO SEEM INTENDED TO OFFSET THE APPEAL OF COMMUNISM, GHAZALI CONCURRED. HE SAID THAT ECONOMIC IMBALANCES ARE SUBJECT TO EXPLOITATION BY NOT ONLY COMMUNISTS BUT BY OTHER (UNNAMED) ELEMENTS. THE OBJECTIVE, HE EMPHASIZED, IS TO ACHIEVE "RESILIENCE," TO BE "ENDURING AND ENDURABLE" IN THE FACE OF THE UNENDING COMMUNIST THREAT. AND, HE ADDED, TO DO THIS WE MUST REALIZE THAT IN DEALING WITH COMMUNISM, WHICH THREATENS OUR BASIC FREEDOMS, WE MUST BE PREPARED TO TOLERATE SOME RESTRAINTS ON OUR FREEDOMS; TO DO OTHERWISE CONCEDES AN UNDUE ADVANTAGE TO THE OTHER SIDE. IN THIS CONTEXT, IT IS UNFAIR FOR ONSIDERS TO JUDGE US BY A DIFFERENT YARDSTICK THAT DOES NOT RECOGNIZE THE DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES WE FACE, HE DECLARED.

6. HUMAN RIGHTS. ALONG THE LINES OF HIS PREVIOUS CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER (RETELS A AND B RESPECTIVELY), THE AMBASSADOR RAISED THE SUBJECT OF OUR CONTINUING HUMAN RIGHTS CONCERNs AND IN PARTICULAR SEVERAL INQUIRIES WE HAVE RECEIVED ON THREE SPECIFIC CASES OF PERSONS DETAINED WITHOUT TRIAL UNDER MALAYSIA'S INTERNAL SECURITY ACT (ISA). THE AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR US TO RECEIVE INFORMATION FROM AN AUTHORITATIVE GOVERNMENT SOURCE TO BE USED AS A FACTUAL BASIS FOR THESE INQUIRIES, SOME OF WHICH REFLECTED CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST.

7. THE HOME MINISTER MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE DID
NOT BELIEVE SUCH INFORMATION SUPPLIED BY THE GOM
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WOULD BE CONSIDERED ADEQUATE, SINCE THE INQUIRIES
WOULD CONSIDER IT BIASED. HE REFERRED BACK TO
POINTS HE HAD MADE IN DISCUSSING SECURITY, AND
THE UNFAIRNESS AS HE SAW IT OF BEING SUBJECTED
TO DIFFERING YARDSTICKS THAT DID NOT
ACCURATELY REFLECT LOCAL CIRCUMSTANCES. GHAZALI
CITED THE FACT THAT DETAINEES HAVE ACCESS TO
LAWYERS AND PERIODIC REVIEW BY A SPECIAL PANEL
AN INDICATIVE OF THE EXISTENCE OF LEGAL COUNSEL
AND A FORM OF JUDICIAL REVIEW. HE ALSO NOTED THAT
HE AS HOME MINISTER DID NOT RPT NOT HAVE THE POWER
TO OVERRULE A PANEL'S FINDINGS, AND THAT SUCH A
DISAGREEMENT WOULD HAVE TO GO TO THE KING FOR
RESOLUTION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT ALL THOSE INDIVIDUALS
DETAINED UNDER THE ISA WERE CHARGED WITH POSING
THREATS TO NATIONAL SECURITY, ALTHOUGH THE EXACT
CIRCUMSTANCES MIGHT VARY SOMEWHAT FROM CASE TO
CASE. IN THIS REGARD HE POINTED OUT THAT NOT
ONLY ARE COMMUNIST TERRORISTS HELD, BUT ALSO
OTHERS INVOLVED IN COMMUNIST ACTIVITIES, CITING
AS EXAMPLES THE CASES OF TWO FORMER DEPUTY
MINISTERS DETAINED IN NOVEMBER 1976.

8. THE AMBASSADOR STRESSED THAT THE USG HELD
MALAYSIA'S HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD IN HIGH REGARD (AS
INDICATED DURING PRIME MINISTER HUSSEIN'S VISIT
TO WASHINGTON LAST FALL), THAT WE WERE FULLY
AWARE THAT THE DETENTIONS IN QUESTION WERE IN
ACCORD WITH DULY ENACTED LEGISLATION (THE ISA),
AND THAT WHAT WE WERE SEEKING WAS FACTUAL AND
AUTHORITATIVE INFORMATION FORM THE GOM ON SPECIFIC
CASES WITH WHICH TO ANSWER CONGRESSIONAL AND
OTHER QUERIES.

9. REFUGEES. THE SUBJECT OF REFUGEES AROSE IN
DISCUSSION OF VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE'S RECENT
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VISIT TO THE REGION AND HIS MAY 10 EAST WEST CENTER
ADDRESS. IN RESPONSE TO GHAZALI'S COMMENT
THAT THE US MUST DEMONSTRATE EVEN MORE TANGIBLY

US CONCERN AND INVOLVEMENT IN THE AREA. THE
AMBASSADOR CITED INTER ALIA THE VICE PRESIDENT'S
FOCUS ON CONTINUED SUBSTANTIAL US INVOLVEMENT

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R 300824Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4706

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 3 OF 3 KUALA LUMPUR 4863

LIMDIS

IN REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT EFFORTS. TO THIS,
GHAZALI RESPONDED THAT THE REFUGEE FLOW POSED A
CONTINUING PROBLEM, NOTING THAT OVER 7000
REFUGEES ARE NOW IN CAMPS ON MALAYSIA'S EAST
COAST. MOREOVER, THE PROBLEM FOR MALAYSIA IS
EXACERBATED BY THE FACT (HE CLAIMED) THAT ETHNIC
CHINESE NOW PREDOMINATE AMONG THE REFUGEES. THIS
SEEMS TO BE A PROBLEM OF THE SRV FORCIBLY EVICTING
ITS CHINESE, RATHER THAN OF POLITICAL REFUGEES
PER SE. WHILE ACKNOWLEDGING AUSTRALIAN AND US
ROLES IN RESETTLEMENT, GHAZALI MADE A STRONG
PITCH FOR EFFORTS TO PERSUADE LATIN AMERICAN
NATIONS TO ACCEPT SOME OF THESE REFUGEES ON THE
GROUNDS THAT "THEY HAVE A LOT OF OPEN SPACES."
ALTHOUGH HE INDICATED THAT THE GOM CONSIDERED THE
INDOCHINESE REFUGEES TO BE A SERIOUS MATTER
WARRANTING SPECIAL ATTENTION, HE EMPHASIZED THAT
OVERLOOKED IN THE EQUATION IS THE FACT THAT
MALAYSIA IS CURRENTLY PROVIDING REFUGE TO OVER
90,000 FILIPINO REFUGEES, AND THIS IN ITS OWN
RESPECT IS A CAUSE FOR ALARM (SEE SEPTEL ON THIS
SUBJECT). THE AMBASSADOR RECALLED THAT LATIN
AMERICAN COUNTRIES HAD TAKEN SOME INDOCHINESE

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REFUGEES IN 1975 AND 1976, AND HE AGREED TO REPORT GHAZALI'S SUGGESTION.

10. NARCOTICS. SEE SEPTEL FOR DISCUSSION OF US-MALAYSIAN COOPERATION IN THE NARCOTICS FIELD.

11. COMMENT: THIS WAS VINTAGE GHAZALI SHAFIE; ARTICULATE, WIDE-RANGING AND INTELLECTUALLY AGGRESSIVE. AFTER THE MEETING THE AMBASSADOR SPOKE WITH MFA UNDERSECRETARY RAZALI ISMAIL, WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT, ABOUT FOLLOWING UP ON THE THREE SPECIFIC DETAINEE CASES ABOUT WHICH WE HAVE REQUESTED INFORMATION. RAZALI PROMISED TO DISCUSS THIS FURTHER WITH THE EMBASSY, AND WE AGREED TO KEEP IN TOUCH ON THIS.

12. DEPARTMENT REPEAT AS DESIRED.

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